

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 17442

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EG
SUBJECT: THE PARLIAMENTARY "INDEPENDENTS"

SUMMARY: MILMI HURAD HAS EMERGED AS FOCUS OF UNOFFICIAL
PARLIMENTARY OPPOSITION. A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTC, HE CLAIMS
TO BE ATTRACTING NASSERISTS AND RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISTS TO
HIS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP. GROUP'S "PLATFORM," WHICH HE NOW
DRAFTING, INSISTS ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS TO ENSURE GOE
EXCLUDED FROM OPERATION POLITICAL PARTIES AND TO FORCE PRESIDENT
INTO DEMOCRATIC POWER-SHARING. MURAD HAS ACCESS TO TV PRIME
TIME AND HIS VIEWS LIKELY STRIKE CHORD THROUGHOUT INTELLECUTAL
ESTABLISHMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. DR. HILMI MURAD,INDEPENDENT ASSEMBLY MEMBER OF DEMOCRATIC
SOCIALIST VIEWS, IS EMERGING AS FOCUS OF REAL OPPOSITION IN
NEW PARLIAMENT. A HIGHLY RESPECTED FIGURE, HE WRESTED ASSEMBLY
SEAT FROM FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GUM'A (WHO HAD GOE
BACKING) CHIEFLY ON HIS REPUTATION AS COURAGEOUS MAN OF
PRINCIPLE. HIS RESIGNATION FROM CABINET IN 1969 IN PROTEST
AGAINST NASSER'S EMASCULATION OF THE JUDICIARY RESULTED IN
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HIS SELF-EXILE FROM EGYPT UNTIL EARLY 1976. DR. MURAD PROVIDED
THE FOLLOWING RUN DOWN OF HIS POLITICAL VIEWS TO EMBOFF
DECEMBER 15:

A. MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM. ALTHOUGH HE HAD RUN CAMPAIGN
ON BASIS THAT THERE SHOULD BE FREEDOM FROM POLITICAL PARTIES,

MURAD IS CHIEFLY CONCERNED THAT THREE PARTIES WHICH EXIST NOW WILL BE MANIULABLE BY SADAT THROUGH THE VESTIGIAL ASU. HE WANTS, THEREFORE, FREEDOM TO FORM INDEPENDENT PARTIES, BUT DOES NOT ADVOCATE UNLIMITED PROLIFERATION. HE IS STRONGLY AGAINST EITHER EXTREME LEFT (COMMUNISTS) OR EXTREME RIGHT (FUNDAMENTALIST MUSLIMS) HAVING A LEGAL POLITICAL VEHICLE.

B. "INDEPDNET" GROUP. WHILE 48 "INDEPDNENT" MEMBERS WERE ELECTED, POST-ELECTION DEFECTIONS PUT CURRENT COUNT AT 38 OR 39. OF THESE, MURAD HAS ORGANIZED ABOUT 30 INTO WHAT HE HOPES WILL BE A LOOSE BUT PERMANENT COALITION WITH WHICH NON-INDEPENDENT MEMBERS WILL ULTIMATELY WISH TO ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES. HE HAS GAINED ADHERENCE OF TWO FAR FIGHT "INDEPENDENTS," INCLUDING MEMBER WHO CAUSED DELAY IN OPENING ASSEMBLY SESSION BY OSTENTATIIOUSLY PRAYING ON CROWDED ASSEMBLY FLOOR. HE HAS ALSO SUCCESSFULLY WOODED NASSERISTS, INCLUDING KAMAL AHAMD. WITH THE RIGHT, HE ARGUES THAT THE ONLY GUIDANCE FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS CONTAINED IN THE KORAN IS THE SINGLE WORD "SHURA" (CONSULTATION), WHICH EVERY LEGISLATIVE GROUP MUST INTERPRET AS IT THINKS BEST. HE BELIEVES THAT BY THUS ARGUING IN RELIGIOUS TERMS, HE CAN MEET RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS TO SECULARIST INSTITUTIONS AND WILL BE ABLE ATTRACT AND HOLD MORE ISLAMIC ADHERENTS IN HIS GROUP. TO THE NASSERISTS, HE POINTS OUT THAT HIS GROUP HAS NO QUARREL WITH NASSER'S REVOLUTION BUT THAT NASSER FAILED ABYSMALLY IN CARRYING OUT SUCH OF THIS OWN PRINCIPLES AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION OF ARAB TERRITORY, AND POLITICAL DEMOCRACY. MURAD IS NOW DRAFTING HIS GROUP'S "PLATFORM" AND WAS DELIGHTED TO BE ABLE TO SAY THAT INDEPDENTS AHMAD TAHA (COMMUNIST) AND KAMAL AHMAD (NASSERISTS) CONFIDENTIAL

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AS WELL AS TWO RIGHTISTS HAVE CONCURRED IN SUCH PLANKS AS PRINCIPLE OF OPEN DOOR (WITH SAFEGUARDS TO PREVENT IT WORKING CHIEFLY TO BENEFIT OF IMPORTERS OF LUXURY GOODS) AND RIGHT TO STRIKE (BUT FIRMLY COUPLED WITH RIGHT TO FIRE AND WITH PROTECTION OF PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS FROM ANY UNFAIR GOE FIRING PRACTICES.)

C. INDEPENDENT PLATFORM. FIRST ARTICLE OF PLATFORM WILL LIST SIX RECOMMENDED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS DESIGNED STRENGTHEN ASSEMBLY. EGYPT IS "DANCING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STAIRS." THERE IS NEITHER A TRUE PRESIDENTIAL NOR PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. WHEN IT SUITS THE GOE, EGYPT IS DESCRIBED AS SOCIALIST, BUT WHEN, FOR EXAMPLE, SADAT IS ANNOYED AT DEMAND FOR RIGHT TO STRIKE, HE RECALLS EVILS OF SOVIET SYSTEM WHERE WORKERS DO NOT DARE PROTEST. SADAT HAS "TOO MAY REINS" IN HIS HAND. HE MAKES POLICY BY MEETING WITH INDIVIDUAL MINISTERS, NOT, AS IS CONSTITUTIONALLY REQUIRED, BY CONSULTATION WITH CABINET AND

PARLIAMENT. ARTICLE 5 OF CONSTITUTION, WHICH DEFINES ASU AS PEOPLES' WORKING ALLIANCE, MUST OF COURSE BE AMENDED WITH INTRODUCTION THREE POLITICAL PARTIES. MURAD WANTS CAREFUL STUDY OF PROPOSED NEW WORDING TO ENSURE ASU IS NOT PERMITTED REMAIN AS VEHICLE THROUGH WHICH SADAT CAN INFLUENCE ASSEMBLY. SECOND MAJOR AMENDMENT REQUIRED IS ARTICLE 115, WHICH PROHIBITS ASSEMBLY FROM AMENDING GOE BUDGET. IF ASSEMBLY IS UNABLE ADD AND SUBTRACT FROM BUDGET, BUDGET DEBATE IS FARCE.

D. IMPACT OF INDEPENDENTS.DR. MURAD OBSERVED THAT IN PERIOD AFTER ELECTIONS AND BEFORE CONVOCAION OF NEW ASSEMBLY, SADAT HAD TAKEN THREE SPECIFIC STEPS MURAD HAD PUBLICLY ADVOCATED: SMALLER CARS FOR MINISTERS, CUT IN PRESIDENCY BUDGET, AND TRANSFER OF SAUDI FUNDS FROM SADAT'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT TO GOE OPERATING ACCOUNT. (AKHBAR LAST SUMMER HAD CHARGED THAT CHECK FROM KING IBN SA'UD, INTENDED COVER EGYPTIAN SHORT-TERM DEBTS, HAD BEEN DEPOSITED IN NASSER'SS PRIVATE ACCOUNT. DR. MURAD HAD CHARGED IN ARTICLE,WHICH AHRAH REFUSED CONFIDENTIAL

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PUBLISH, THAT SADAT,WHEN HE BECAME PRESIDENT, TRANSFERRED SAME MONEY INTO HIS PRIVATE ACCOUNT.) IN SHORT, MURAD BELIEVES HE HAS GOE SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED ABOUT HIS NUISANCE VALUE THAT IT IS ALREADY SEEKING TAKE WIND OUT OF HIS POLITICAL SAILS.

E. MAKE-UP OF ASSEMBLY. MURAD AGREED THAT PARTY SYSTEM HAS HAD LITTLE IF ANY EFFECT ON ELECTIONS. IN COUNTRYSIDE, SAME OLD FAMILIES ELECTED THEIR OWN CANDIDATES, MOST OF WHOM WERE FROM GOVERNMENT PARTY, AS VILLAGE FATHERS INEVITABLY SEEK FAVORS FROM GOE. WAFD, HE THOUGHT, LIVES, BUT ONLY FOR THE OLDER GENERATION. ONE OF HIS INDEPENDENTADHERENTS, FOR EXAMPLE, A MININT UNDER NAHHAS PASHA, IS 73 YEARS OLD. SECRET OF NEW NASSERISTS' APPEAL IS NOT URBAN ENTHUSIASM FOR NASSER BUT RATHER URBAN DISENCHANTMENT WITH SADAT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES. BY SHOUTING FOR NASSER AT KAMAL AHMAD RALLIES, STUDENTS AND WORKERS ARE SIMPLY VOICING DISPLEASURE WITH SADAT, WHOM THEY WOULD NOT DARE ATTACK OPENLY. RELIGIOUS RESURGENCE IS CRITICAL FACTOR IN ASSEMBLY, AS IT IS IN SOCIETY AT LARGE. GOE IS RIGHT TO ATTEMPT CHANNEL RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM INTO AS CONSTRUCTIVE PATHS AS POSSIBLE; TO ATTEMPT TO OBSTRUCT IS TO GENERATE EXPLOSION.

2. COMMENT: GOE IS ALLOWING MURAD AND OTHER DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST INDEPENDENTS,SUCH AS MAHMUD AL-QADI, FREEDOM TO ORGANIZE THEIR GROUP AND PUBLICIZE ITS VIEWS. CHIEF FIXER FOR SADAT, SPEAKER MAR'I, IS ACTIVELY SEEKING HOLD OPPOSITION WITHIN ACCEPTABLE LIMITS, BUT NO ONE YET KNOWS HOW SADAT DEFINES WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE. OFFICIAL OPPOSITION, LED BY RIGHTIST PARTY HAEAD MUSTAFA KAMIL MURAD, WILL PROVIDE FEW PROBLEMS FOR MAR'I. IT IS HILMI MURAD, WHO IS CREATIVE, FEARLESS AND DETERMINED, WHO WILL

CAUSE GOE HEADACHES. NO ONE SUGGESTS HE IS NOT GENUINE PATROIT
DEDICATED TO POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. CRUNCH MAY COME
WHEN HIS DEFINITION OF HOW FAR AND HOW FAST CLASHES WITH
SADAT'S PERCEPTIONS.
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